

# 2021 OMSSA Exchange

The Next Chapter in Social Assistance Recovery and Renewal:  
Co-designing a Renewed Social Assistance Operating Model

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# Purpose and Overview

- MCCSS is working with municipal partners to transform social assistance and co-design a new system that connects people to the supports they need to achieve greater independence and employment
- Work is underway to develop a system that connects clients to integrated human services through renewed roles and responsibilities between the province and municipalities
- Today, we'll look at and discuss our plan for how the system will function to achieve outcomes and the sequencing of key work over the next 12-18 months. We'll be seeking your input on engagement and transformation challenges.

# SA Recovery & Renewal Plan | September 2021

## Where we've been...



- Growing caseload and costs (5%/year)
- Focus on administration and processes, not support
- Broader system is siloed, hard to navigate, leading to poor life and employment outcomes



## Where we're headed...

- When federal benefits end, Ontarians who remain out of work are likely to turn to Ontario Works – the scale and timing of the impact to social assistance depends on the speed and nature of economic recovery, and public health factors

## Announced last fall, the recovery & renewal plan (R&R) focused action in five key areas to get ahead of an increase in social assistance cases



### Accelerated digital delivery solutions

To improve access and service delivery during the pandemic

- new, easy online application
- digital disability forms
- MyBenefits expansion
- 2-way messaging
- video chat
- e-document management



### Centralized and automated delivery

Reduce red tape and let caseworkers focus on working with clients

- centralized intake
- digital identity verification
- centralized key ODSP health benefits
- e-signatures



### Risk-based eligibility review

To automate eligibility assessments, reduce time spent on administration

- real-time digital verification to confirm key eligibility information
- automatic verification and validation of financial information to confirm eligibility



### Enhanced access to employment and training

To connect people to the right interventions and, over time, to the right level of service

- awareness of the “post-federal benefit” cohort
- enhance access to employment and training supports
- new case management models
- new life stabilization framework



### Collaborate with Partners

- Co-design a transformation vision with municipalities.
- Work with First Nations partners to develop a separate recovery and renewal plan.
- Engage with key stakeholders

# Municipal-Provincial vision for SA transformation | February 2021



**Vision:** To create an efficient, effective and streamlined social services system that focusses on people, providing them with a range of services and supports to respond to their unique needs and address barriers to success so they can move towards employment and independence

## How we will realign:



### Province

Delivers:

- End-to-end financial entitlements
- Financial controls and back-office functions suited to centralization or automation



### Municipalities

Deliver:

- Life stabilization (including needs assessment, service planning, warm referrals, discretionary benefits)
- Person-centered, connected supports, and navigation of broader system (e.g., housing, employment, mental health)

## How we will evolve over time:

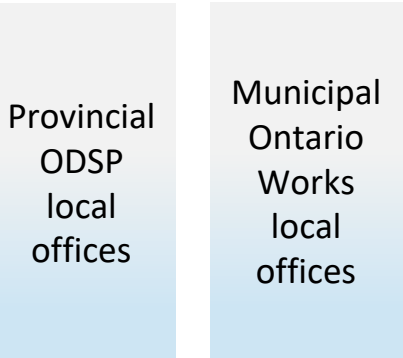


### Current state

everybody does everything

Financial assistance

Person-centered supports



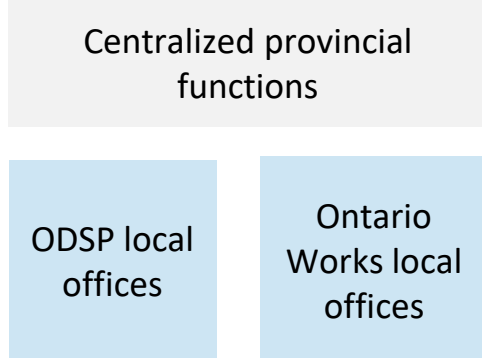
### Phase one model

realign functions

Centralized provincial functions

ODSP local offices

Ontario Works local offices



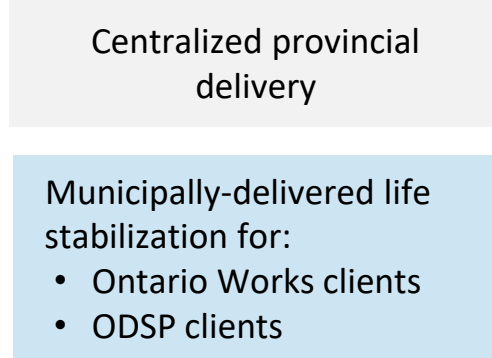
### Phase two model

realign delivery

Centralized provincial delivery

Municipally-delivered life stabilization for:

- Ontario Works clients
- ODSP clients



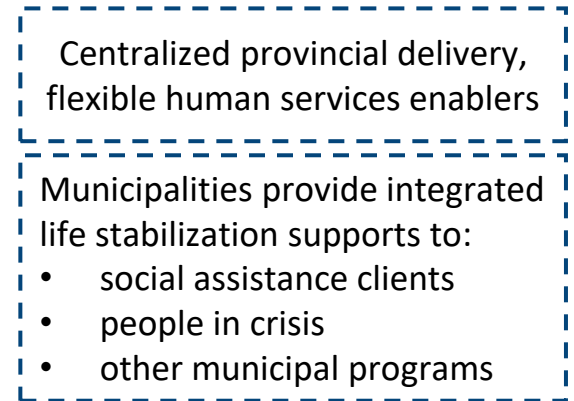
### Human services model

broaden access to caseworkers

Centralized provincial delivery, flexible human services enablers

Municipalities provide integrated life stabilization supports to:

- social assistance clients
- people in crisis
- other municipal programs

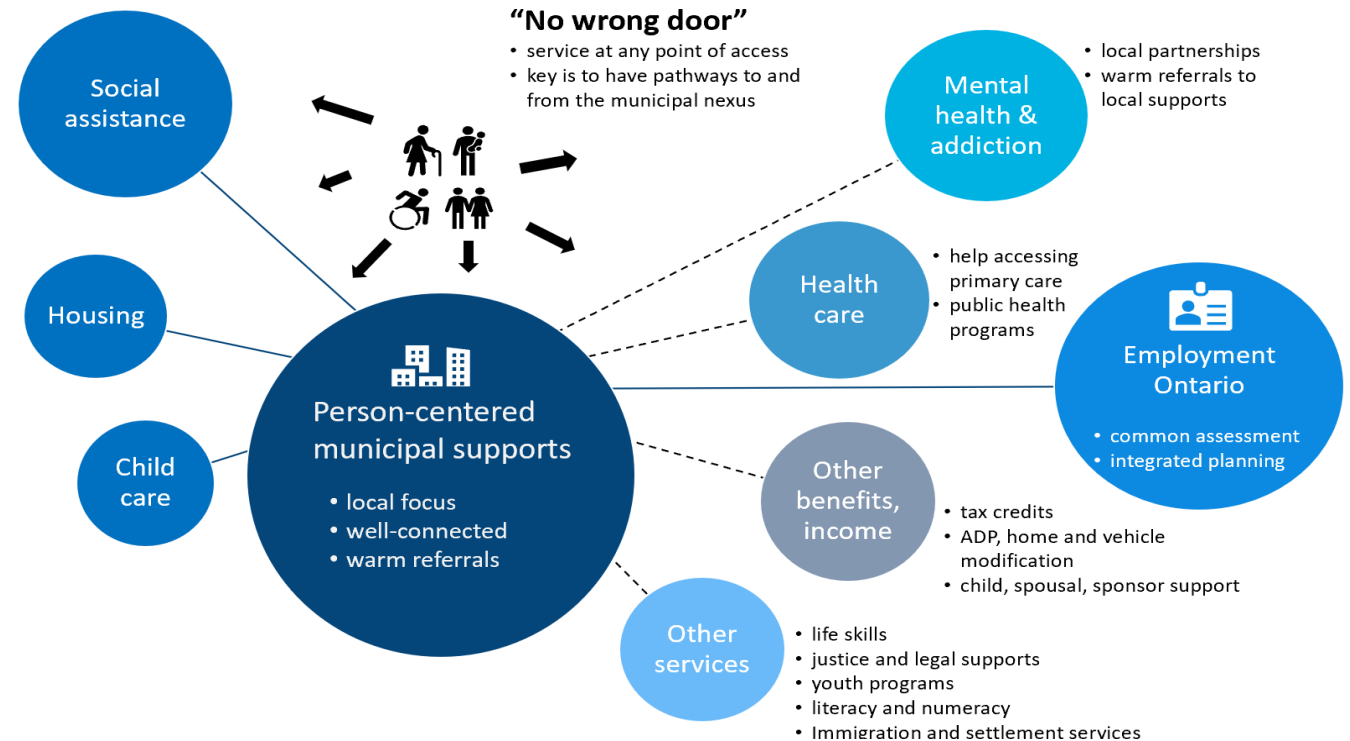


# Moving to a Human Services Delivery Model

## The opportunity

We can co-design a new future state where social assistance program is just one component of a broader approach to life stabilization

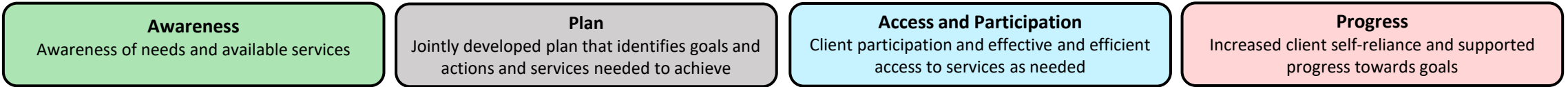
- In the human services model, benefits like social assistance become “tools” in the caseworker toolbox, as opposed to the other way around
- Caseworkers are knowledgeable about the broader system of benefits and supports, and can guide people to the supports they need – whether Ontario Works or something else
- People seeking help are triaged by municipal caseworkers, supported as needed, and potentially diverted from social assistance



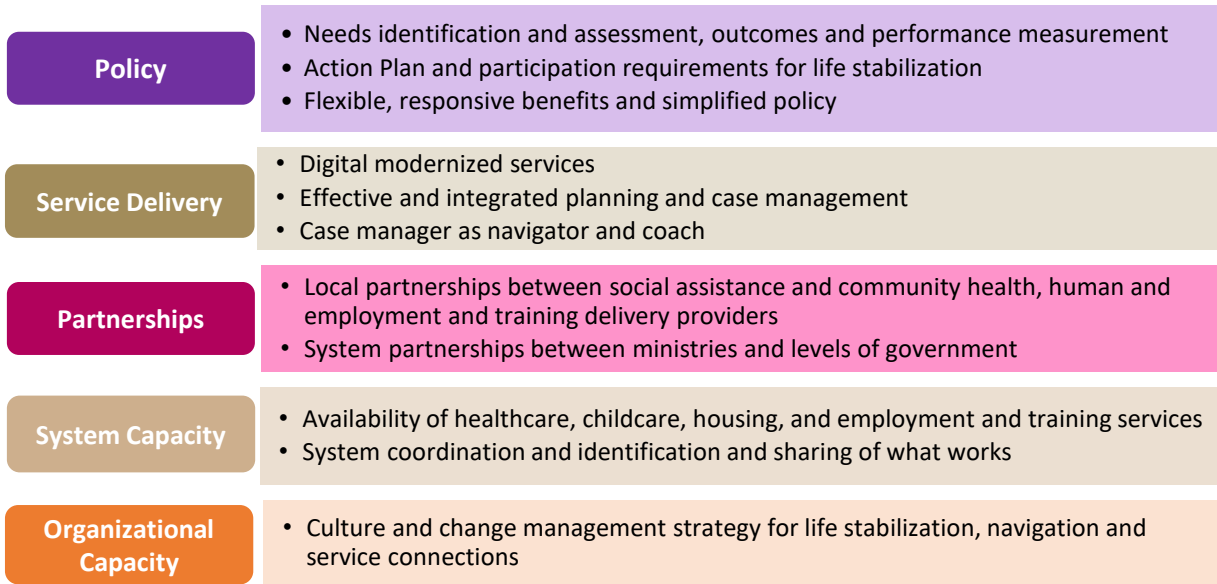
# Social Assistance Life Stabilization Framework

Supporting social assistance recipients on a pathway towards independence and employment readiness.

**Client Goals**



**Key Enablers** → **Life Stabilization Services**



**Education & Training**

- Public & Alternative Education
- Training & Skills Development
- Employment services

**Child Services**

- Child Welfare
- Early Years & Child Care
- Family & Spousal Support

**Federal Government**

- Immigration & Settlement Services

**Local Partnerships**

- Private, non-profit
- Community programs

**Health**

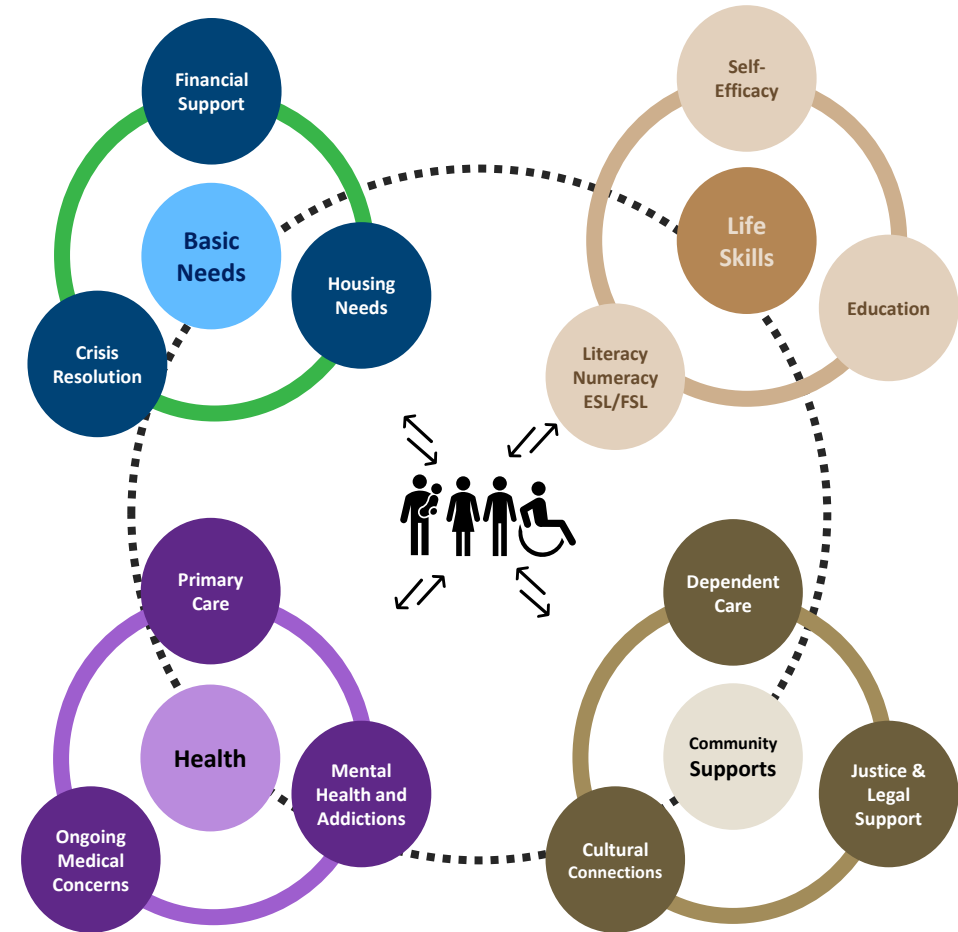
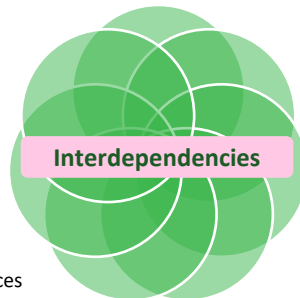
- Primary & Public Health
- Mental Health and Addictions

**Community Safety & Justice**

- Parole & Probation
- Violence Prevention

**Housing**

- Housing and homelessness initiatives



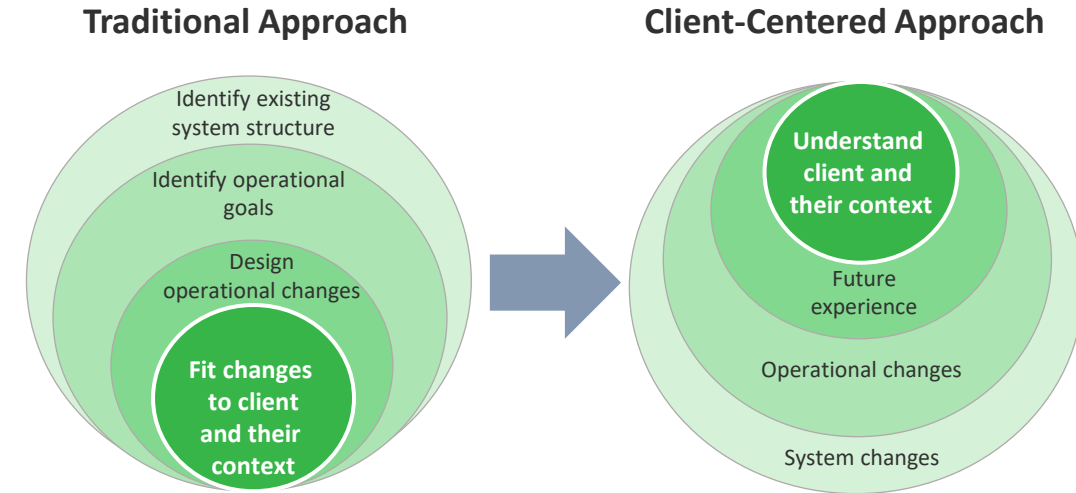
# Defining Co-Design and Success

## What is co-design?

At its core, **co-design** is **provincial and municipal partners** working **collaboratively** and **iteratively**, **building through group decision-making at every critical juncture.**

## What makes it successful?

- Meaningful collaboration, with people working together, across organizations, in an integrated way
- Consistent commitment from the same dedicated group end-to-end
- A focus on putting the client and their needs at the centre
- A focus on outcomes, including flexibility and accountability
- Open minds and authentic listening to innovation that makes sense at the local level
- Acknowledgment of the expertise and strengths of all participants



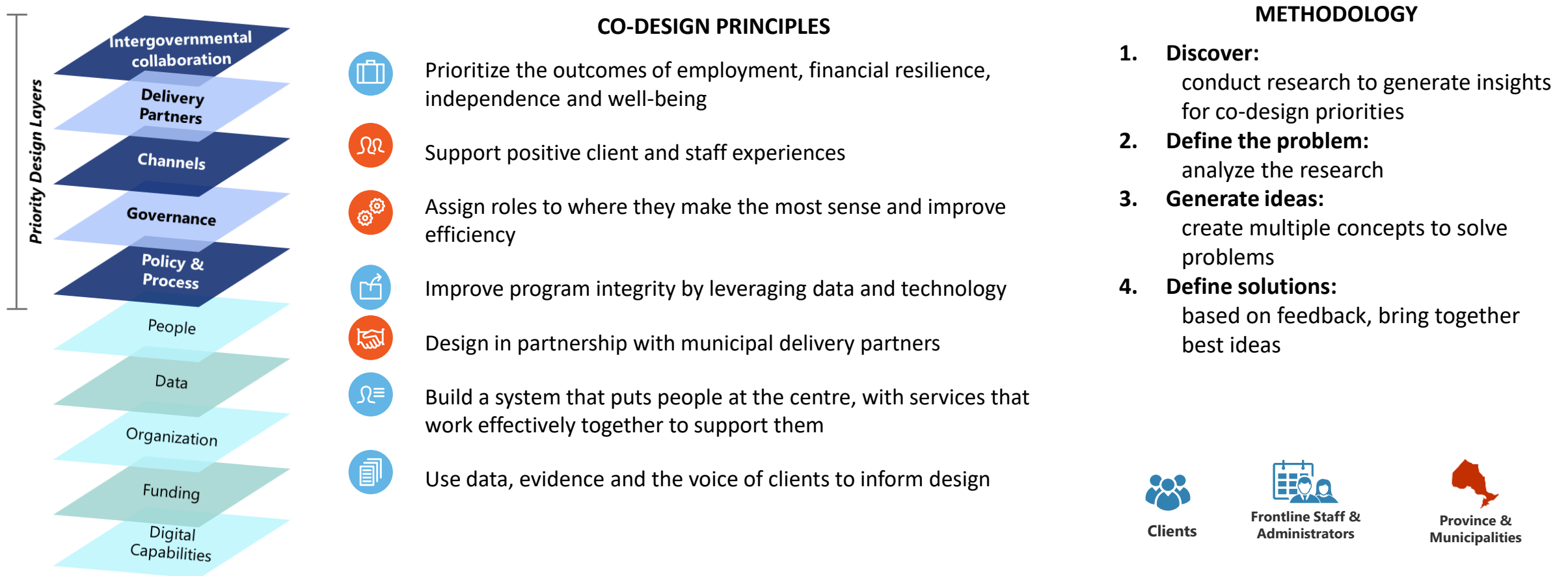
*This approach puts people at the center of program delivery and design.*

## How will we know if the Co-Design has been successful?

- Changes to services, offerings or functions are **appropriate for, and aligned with, the vision.**
- Outputs reflect a **client-centred** and **outcomes-focused** view
- There is **shared understanding** and **acceptance** of the **implications of the changes** needed to reach the vision, from an operational and funding and accountability point of view.
- There is **willingness by all** to abide by and advance the work required **over the long term** to implement the changes.

# Co-Design Roadmap Inputs

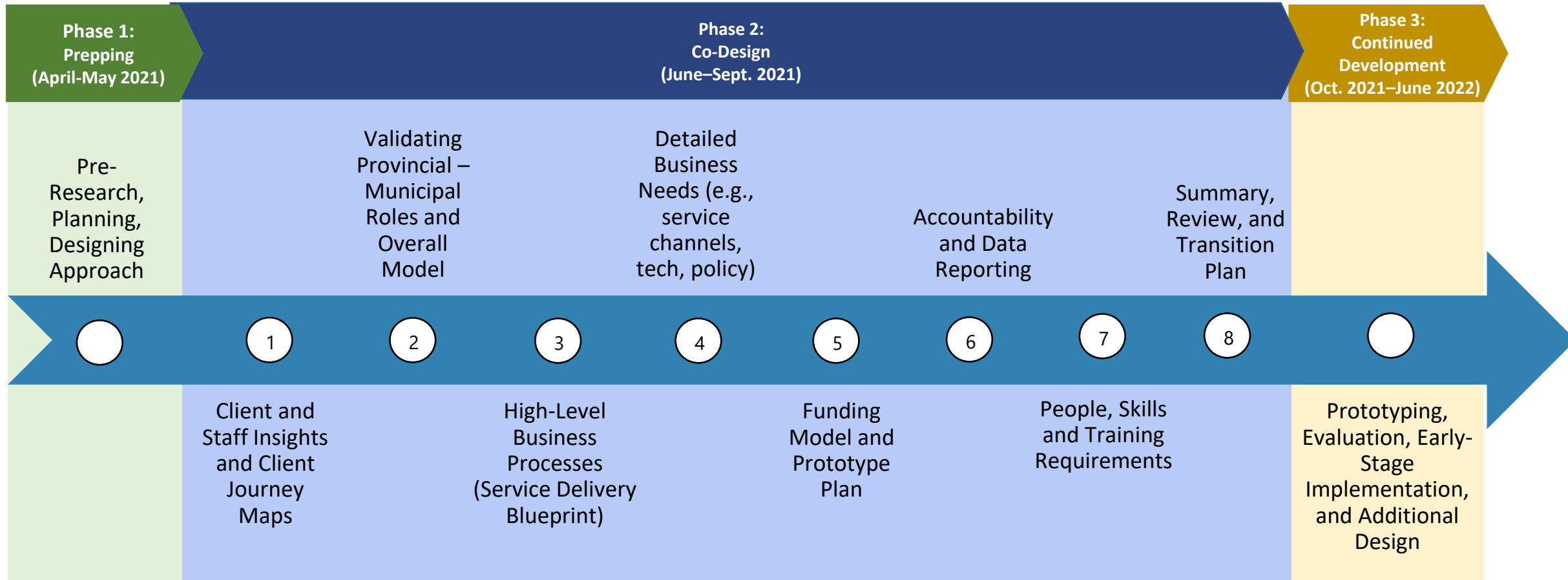
The **Operating Model** is a **blueprint** for social assistance delivery in the province. It is the sum total of how we as an organization deliver service and operate and consists of several layers. These are the program elements will be co-designed.



The co-design roadmap on the next slide articulates the key **areas of focus, timing and sequence** to design the renewed operating model.



# Co-Design Roadmap



# Context on Co-Design and Broader Stakeholder Engagement

We will be working closely with PMSAEC and the PMSAEC sub-committees in to build a detailed co-design plan including defining the relevant stakeholders, forums, and approaches to embed in co-design. This will be integrated with and complemented by the broader engagement activities.



## Deloitte Stakeholder Engagement

### *Approach:*

- Targeted engagement with representative cross-section of clients, staff and partners focused on gathering insights and input to inform technical design outputs
- Limited to the period of the engagement (September 2021)



## Provincial and Municipal Engagement

### *Approach:*

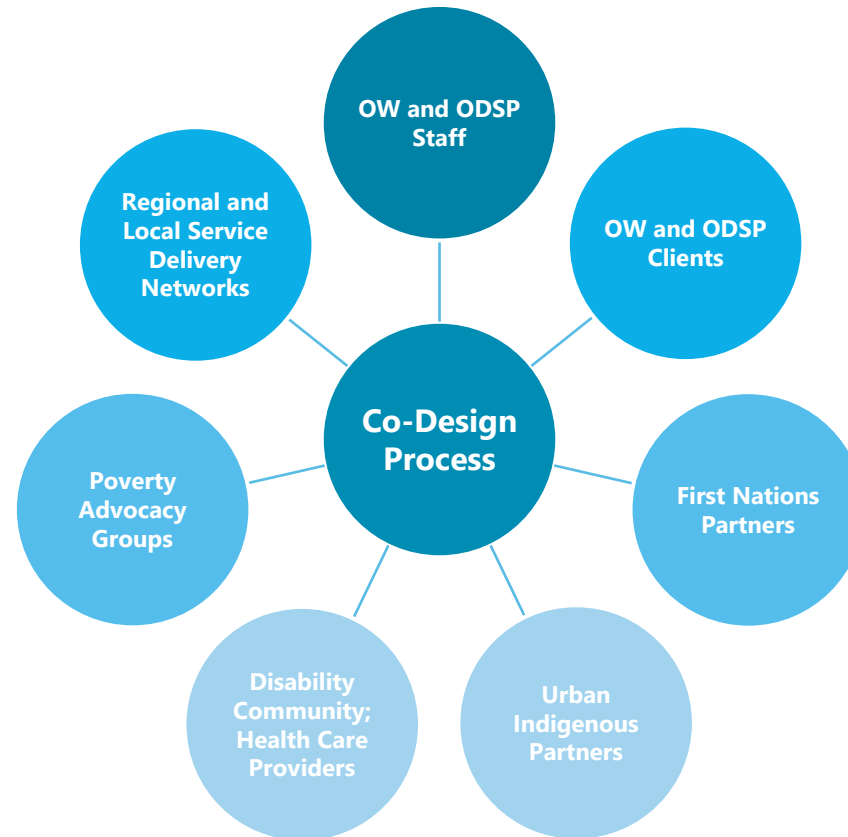
- Broad engagement, leveraging existing tables and forums in an ongoing conversation that seeks to be as inclusive as possible to inform not only co-design but also buy-in for the vision overall, change management and relationship-building for the long-term
- Ongoing timeframe, including implementation (2024)

Deloitte will be working to ensure that the stakeholder forums already in place/envisioned will be leveraged to provide key end user insights and perspectives to inform co-design, in addition to any targeted end-user engagement that would occur through Deloitte's work.

# Stakeholders and Partners

Advancing our objectives across the system will require us collectively to engage and communicate broadly, but different approaches may be needed for different groups at different times.

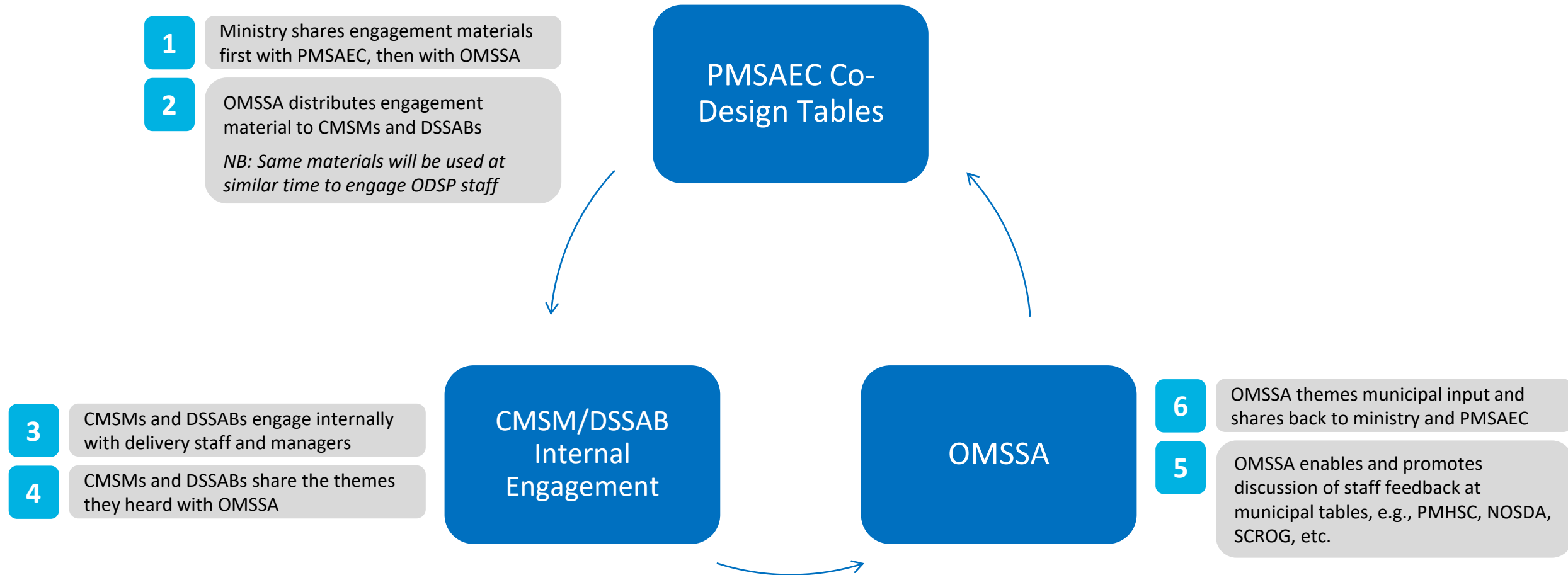
MCCSS will be working with Deloitte and the PMSAEC Change Management and Communications Committee to plan for engagement with these groups.



**Note:** Within these stakeholders, there are also more specific groups with interests that may be related to language (i.e. Francophone), culturally appropriate service delivery, provincial/local elements etc.

# Staff Engagement: How We Involve Everyone

To effectively engage municipal staff across the province on key questions related to the design of the future system, we plan to collaborate with municipalities and OMSSA to encourage discussions and bring insight and ideas forward.

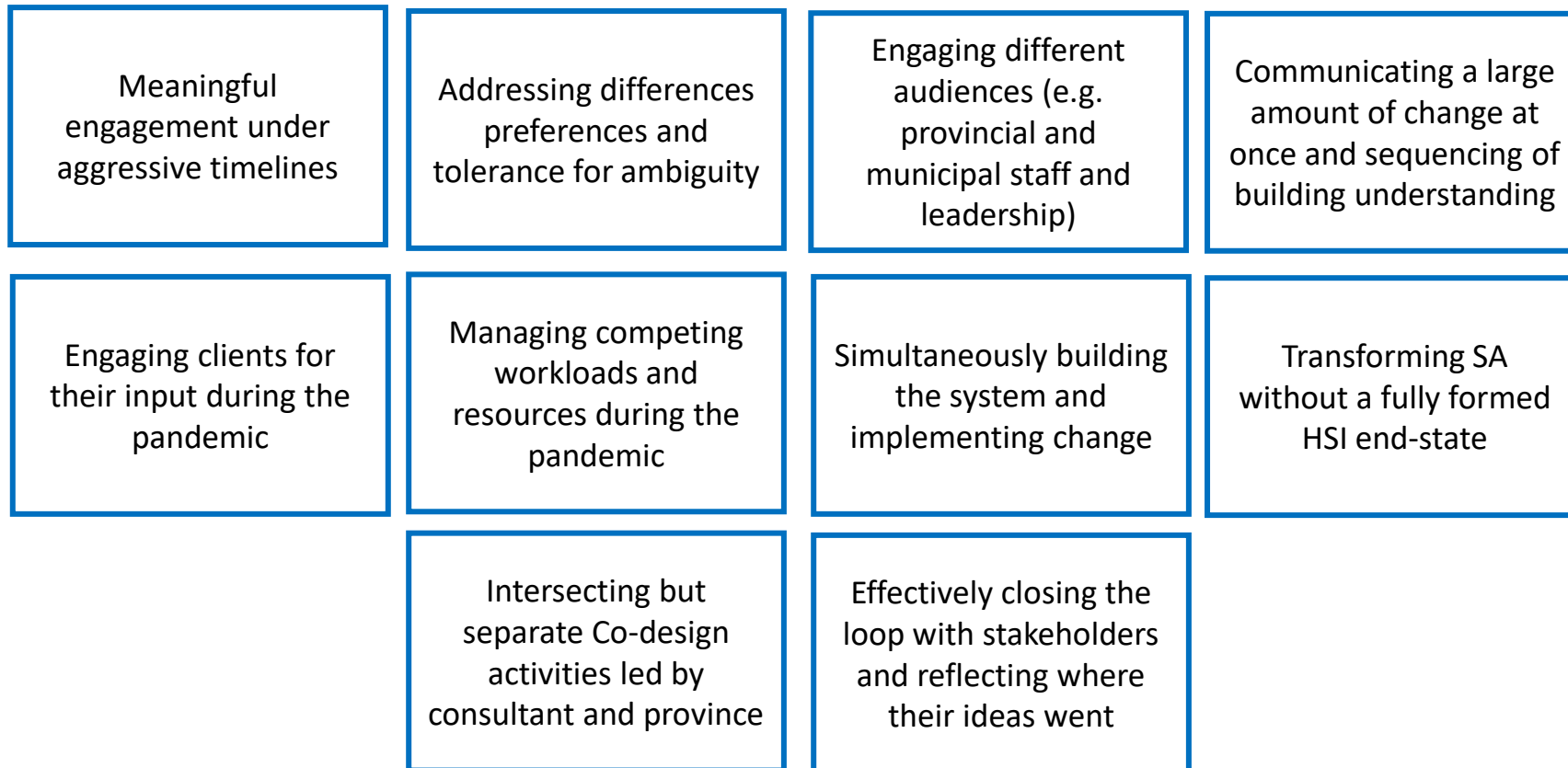


# Discussion Questions for Engagement Approach

- How can we clarify OMSSA members' role in the staff engagement process for R&R?
- What needs to happen for this engagement to be successful?

# Co-design to Date: Early Learnings, Challenges and Tensions

- Based on the various engagements and progress made to date, some initial learnings and challenges with the process have been identified:



# Discussion Questions for Early Learnings, Challenges and Tensions

- There is a lot of experience in the room in leading and supporting change. Are there any other challenges we should anticipate?
- What is your advice on how we can address these challenges and tensions?